

Halls thamar, Carl

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Statues of Abraham Lincoln

Carl Hallsthammar

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

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New Art of Duplicating Wood Sculpture Born in "Kelly's Stables"

Portrait of Lincoln First Karvart Piece

"Lincoln"—Carl Hallsthammar

By C. J. Bulliet.

A new art has just been born in Chicago by which wood carving in low relief can be reproduced exactly on other slabs of wood.

The inventor is Everett Worthington, an expert furniture designer, formerly of San Francisco, and for the last six years resident in Chicago. He has perfected the process in four years since the idea occurred to him in bending furniture veneers shortly after coming to Chicago.

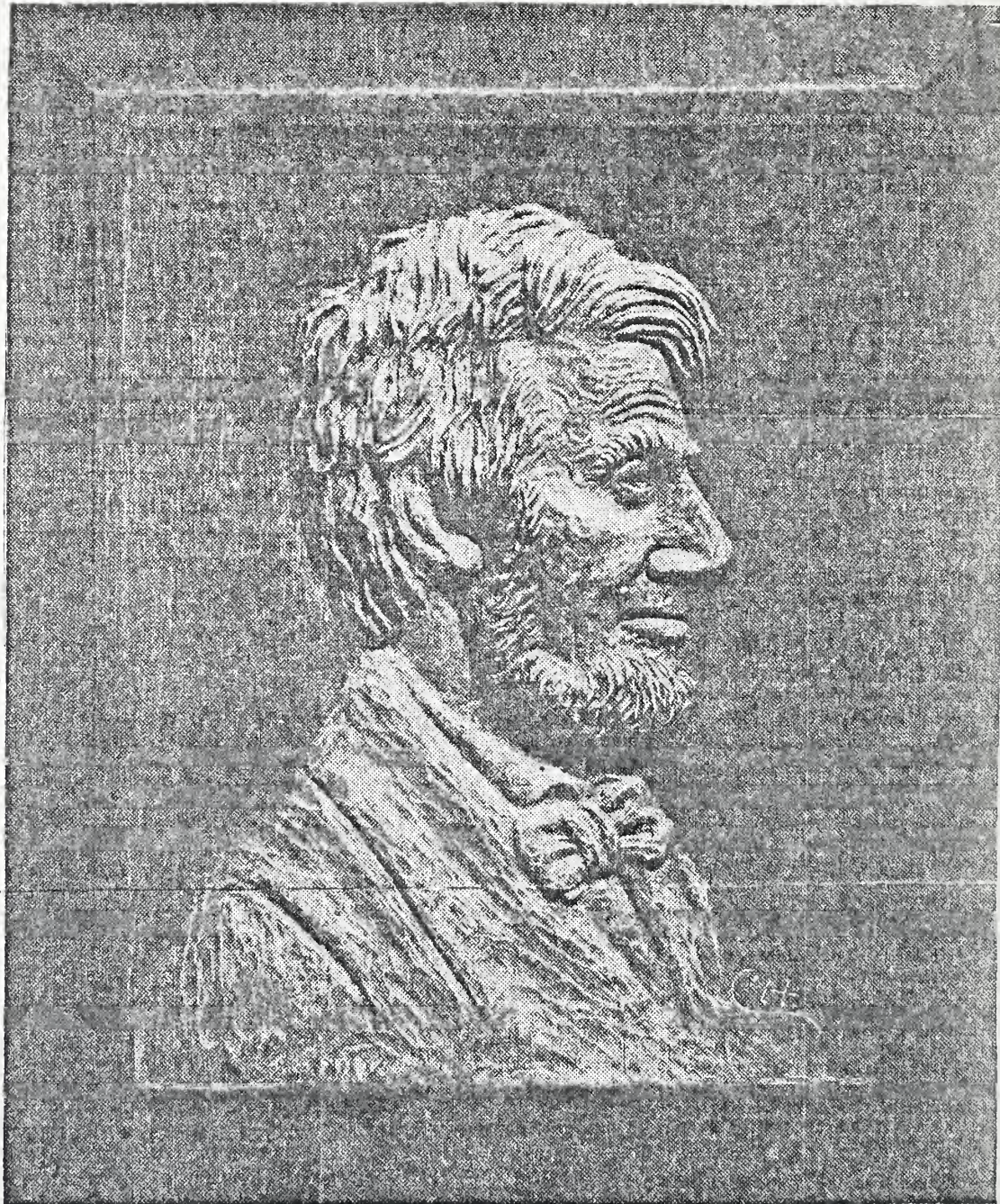
The first subject to be successfully tried is a portrait of Abraham Lincoln, carved by Carl Hallsthammar, also of Chicago, whose wood sculpture has made him nationally famous.

The reproduction is an actual work of art, just as is an etching or a lithograph. Each plaque, indeed, is even more distinctive than a print from the etcher's plate or the lithographer's stone, since the grain and color of the wood used are never identical.

Mr. Worthington's "secret" in the new process, which he calls tentatively "Karvart," is a method by which he stretches the substance of a slab of wood so as to take the print, under heat and high pressure, of brass dies.

It is no trick to get such an impression in wood pulp, but this is the first time, according to the inventor, it has been possible to stretch the substance of a slab of wood itself, and then restore the fiber so that it is as strong—even stronger—than it was originally.

The finished plaque, according to Mr. Worthington, will last practically forever, subject to none of the weathering of wood that makes the woodcarver's art at times so discouraging. Huge cracks, for example, are apt to appear after a time in a fine bit of wood statuary, or moisture may cause a scaling. In the "Karvart" pieces, the wood, under the heat and terrific pressure to which it is subjected, attains a new permanence analogous to "calendared" paper.



CHICAGO EVENING POST

Courtesy Everett Worthington.

Low relief sculpture in wood by Hallsthammar being duplicated by the Worthington process.

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T. J. Power

The woods employed are the hardwoods of the furniture makers—the six Lincoln "prints" so far finished are in walnut. The plaques are laminated, five-ply, and so far a relief of five-eighths of an inch has been attained.

It is the purpose of Mr. Worthington and Mr. Hallsthammar to do a "limited edition" of the Lincoln and then destroy the brass die, just as the etcher, after an edition is finished, renders useless his copper plate or the lithographer his stone.

The Lincoln is to be followed by a Hallsthammar portrait of Roosevelt, and then probably will come a Hallsthammar Washington.

Mr. Worthington points out that Hallsthammar is the artist of the combination and that he appears in the role of the "printer."

However, the "printer" has much to do in selecting the surfaces of the wood, not only as to grain but as to sawing and lack of flaws. Two or three slabs are apt to be spoiled before a perfect "print" is attained.

Then the "printer," too, must know how to manipulate the pressure. The whole process takes about half an hour, during which the pressure must be applied and relieved many times, and different features of the carving attended to individually, according to the height or depth of the relief.


* * *

In addition to being unique as the first work in "Karvart," Hallsthammar's Lincoln is one of the finest, serious pieces of work that have come from the hand of this sculptor

in wood, who is best known for his drollery.

Hallsthammar studied all available portraits of Lincoln—painted, engraved or sculptured—and then carved out a conception of his own. It is rugged in the spirit of the Emancipator—at the same time extraordinarily sensitive in feature. Worthington was delighted with these sensitive lines, since it tested his process to the final limit and proved its perfection.

Worthington's studio is famous in the bohemian history of Chicago as "Kelly's Stables." He has taken a lease on the place so long famous as a center of night life, and there set up his forges, metal pots, saws and whatever other equipment is necessary to make "Karvart" portraits ready for the art marts.



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